

The Lancaster Intelligencer

"THAT COUNTRY IS THE MOST PROSPEROUS WHERE LABOR OBTAINS THE GREATEST REWARD."—BUCHANAN.

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ORIGINAL—TO C. J. D.

Yes, thou wert a lovely vision,
In a night of gloom and pain,
Leading us through scenes Elysian
Back to joyous youth again.
But the glorious dream has faded,
Faded from my aching sight,
And has left my spirit wild
In a cloud of deeper night.
Like a cloud of snowy whiteness
That above me came and passed,
Angled features in its brightness,
Yet for a shadow cast;
Dimming in my path the gladness
Of the yet unclouded day,
Leaving there a spot of sadness
When its beauty passed away.
Better that I had not met thee—
Strangely charmed in thy love met,
Better that I had never seen thee,
All these idle dreams forgot;
For the bright dream of waking
Saddled to the maddening world,
As the strongest cords to breaking
Leave behind the dearest cord.
We have parted, eyes to forever
I can no more see thy face,
I must strive my heart to sever
From its memory every trace.
Fare thee well, my peace attend thee
In the distant home where thou art,
Headless of the prayer I send thee,
Spirit-guarded, slumberest now.

SOMEBODY'S BOY.

By W. L. G. L. I.
Somebody's son was out last night
Braving about the town;
And if it's anybody's boy,
'Tis a 'right as a Derby crow.
I know he's come dand a moral youth,
Above suspicion—but that
In no reason why, to tell the truth,
He hadn't a 'brick in his hat.
Daylight morality often takes
Strange fancies into his head,
And 'twill play the devil's game,
When the public eye is in bed.
'My son can't dance,' Somebody said,
'Nor never a lesson took he,
But he'll do it last night when you were in bed,
And I'll light him up to see.
You may call it dancing, or not, as you feel,
Though for half an hour or so,
He danced or 'lighted up the floor,
In front of my office door.
'My son can't sing,' Somebody swears,
But he'll sing last night when you were in bed,
As he'll sing a song as a demon dars
To sing in the regions below.
'My son don't fiddle,' Somebody thinks,
Who may be he'll fiddle up some day,
As he'll fiddle a tune like a fiddle,
Can be proved by a hundred men.
Yet something was tight, you draw, last night,
So drunk it could scarcely crawl,
Perhaps 'twas the brim of a crownless hat,
That I found by my garden wall.
So, for fear I am wrong and Somebody's right,
And say that the thing I saw last night
Was nobody's son—that's all!

THE OLD OAK CHEST.

CHAPTER I.

It was about four o'clock in the afternoon on a cold, gloomy day at the end of January, in the year 1829, when a fair young girl stood at a cottage window, watching with tearful eyes the retreating form of one who had just bidden her farewell for an indefinite period. She had gone through the leaving-taking bravely, trying to lighten his heart with cheering words though her own was full of heaviness, but when she had lost sight of his tall figure amid the increasing darkness, she came back to her place by the fireside, and said in a sorrowful tone—
'Oh, mother, it will be a weary summer, and a heavy.'

'Yes, my dear child; but let us remember that it is but a year, and it may not be long, after all. Perhaps, Mary, even before this time next year, we may have him back with us again.'
Mary tried to feel hopeful, but a strange foreboding of evil weighed down her spirits to the lowest ebb, and despite all her own efforts and her mother's kind and gentle reasoning, she could not shake it off.
Mary Archer was the only child of a lady whose husband had been an officer in the army, and whose sole means of support were now derived from the small pension allowed to a captain's widow. She was in very delicate health, and had been lame for several years in consequence of an accident, so that she was wholly dependent on her daughter for the cares of a nurse, as well as for the management of her little household; and Mary discharged all these duties so lovingly and so faithfully, that her mother's affection and industry, the invalid was afforded many comforts out of her slender income that, with a less careful housekeeper, she could not have had, and the house, though humble, was always so neat and nice that it was more pleasant to look upon than many a grander dwelling.

And who was he from whom Mary Archer had just parted? He was but her lover—her betrothed; but he was as poor as herself in worldly wealth, and was going to Germany with the Baron Steinbach, in the capacity of tutor to that gentleman's two sons.
Going to Germany thirty years ago was not quite so simple an affair as it is now, and in the mind of Mary Archer the journey was fraught with a thousand perils and dangers that afflicted her, and when she had received her last embrace she felt as if they were being separated forever.
He had accepted the appointment because he could get nothing more eligible for the time being, but he had a better prospect in the distance, which made his difficulties light to bear, and had it not been for leaving his beloved, he would have had no objection to a temporary sojourn in a foreign country.

Left an orphan and penniless at an early age, he was admitted into the school of Christ's Hospital through the interest of an old lady who had known his mother from her childhood. At 18 he gained an examination for Oxford, where he studied with a view in due time of entering the church, and in due time was ordained—then his kind benefactor, who had continued to befriend him, put a crowning hand to her good work by purchasing for him the reversion of a living worth four to five hundred a year, the incumbent of which was an old man, and shortly after this he died.

Everard Newton had now to struggle on as best he might until the benefice should become vacant—and having vainly attempted to secure a curacy or a junior mastership in one of the public schools, he accepted the office of private tutor to the

sons of Baron Steinbach, who was about to visit Germany.
Mary Archer had long been the chosen of his heart, and he had known her love reciprocated—but he did not know, for Mary had carefully concealed that circumstance from him, that he had a rival in the lord of the manor, Mr. Lonsdale, a little, grey-headed, old man, somewhat deformed in person, but enormously rich, and remarkable for his refined and polite manners.

It was but two years since he had come from Italy to take possession of the large property that had devolved on him in consequence of the death of his brother, so that he was but little known in the country where his estate was situated, but he stood well with the neighboring gentry, and also with his tenantry, taking care to propitiate the former by his courteous demeanor, and the latter by his liberality. He always spoke in a gentle tone, never using harsh words even when angry, and there was generally a bland smile on his countenance that gained him the reputation of being a benevolent, kind-hearted man.

The youth and extreme beauty of Mary Archer had first drawn his notice towards her, and these attractions being heightened by the amiable disposition displayed in her affectionate attentions to her suffering parent, had induced him to offer her his hand, in the full belief that the magic influence of wealth would counterbalance the objections of age and infirmity.
Mary said she felt careful for the preference with which he had honored her, but that her heart had long been given to another; and then she candidly told him what was her lover's actual position—the spoke of his present straitened circumstances, as well as of his future prospects, and gracefully but decidedly declined the offer of riches and splendor now laid at her feet; on which the disappointed wooer, with many expressions of deep regret, withdrew his suit, and departed.

Mary had said nothing about this proposal to Everard, fearing it might make him uneasy to know that, while he was far away, there was a lover so near, who had the power of holding out many temptations to induce her to break her faith.
And so he bade her adieu in happy ignorance of a danger that actually would have caused him much anxiety and disquiet.

He had a full mile to walk to meet the coach that was to convey him to London, and part of his way lay over a dreary common, at some distance from the high road, but as he had gone the same way of being molested, but walked on at a brisk pace, thinking of the lovely girl he had just left, when, in passing a clump of trees, he was suddenly seized by the arms, and before he had time to make any resistance was thrown to the ground, while the thick stick he carried for protection, and a carpet bag containing some apparel, were wrested from his grasp.

He endeavored to call for help, but his voice was stifled by something that was pressed upon his face; he felt a sensation as if he were being suffocated—then a death-like stupor seemed to steal over his senses, and he knew no more.
The first moment of returning consciousness was like the awakening from a long trance. It appeared to him as if ages had passed away since last he looked upon the earth and sky. He felt that something extraordinary had happened, but could not remember what it was. His mind was confused, and he gazed with wonder on the unfamiliar objects that surrounded him.

He was lying on a low pallet in one corner of a large gloomy, ill-furnished apartment, dimly lighted by a single lamp that stood on a clumsy oak table. In another corner of the room was a great wooden chest, and against the wall were three or four heavy, high-backed chairs, and that was all the place contained.
Everard sat up on the wretched couch, which was nothing but a hard mattress laid on the floor, and tried to recall the events that had brought him into this strange situation. By degrees he recollected how he had been attacked on the common, and as his senses became more clear, he was convinced that some powerful opiate had been employed to throw him into a deep, unnatural sleep, but how long that had lasted he could not tell.

He was dressed the same as when he left Mrs. Archer's cottage, but his watch and purse were gone. A faint glimmering of daylight was just beginning to appear from above, and he now observed there was no window in the dungeon-like room, except a small skylight in the middle of a lofty room of rough timbers.
It was some time before he could discover any door, when he did, he found it fastened on the outside. Then came the question—was he a prisoner, or had he been brought here by some good Samaritan who had found him by the wayside?

The men who assaulted him were no doubt robbers, who had probably been interrupted before they had completed the work of spoliation, since they had not "stripped him of his raiment," and this was the more fortunate, as he had taken the precaution to secure some bank notes by sewing them within the lining of his coat.

At length he heard the sound of approaching footsteps; then there was a creaking noise as of heavy bolts being withdrawn—the door was opened, and to his infinite horror and dismay, two men in black masks, each carrying a pistol in his belt, entered the room, one bearing a load of faggots, which he threw down on the hearth, the other a can of some hot liquid and a covered basket.

All the horrors of the inquisition rose up before the excited imagination of the prisoner, for so he now deemed himself to be. He was acquainted, too, with the history of the secret tribunals once so formidable in Germany, and asked himself, "Was it possible that such a wretched man as I am, a member of some obscure fraternity, and these men, who looked more like fiends than anything human, sent to put him to the torture?"
All these terrible ideas rushed like lightning through his still bewildered brain, and starting to his feet he demanded fiercely—
"What place is this? and why am I brought here?"
"It is a very good place," answered one of the fellows, in a gruff voice, "and you are brought here to be taken care of; so

now you know all about it, and you may as well have your breakfast."
As he spoke he placed on the table the smoking cauldron, the contents of which proved nothing worse than hot coffee, while from the basket, instead of instruments of torture, he produced a loaf and a dish of broiled bacon.
Everard was thus relieved from his fears of immediate bodily harm, but he said—
"I shall take nothing till I know by whose authority I am detained here and for what purpose."
"You'll keep a pretty long fast, I guess," replied the man, with a laugh; "but I shall leave the prog at any rate. Perhaps you'll change your mind."
"At least tell me—in England?"
"Why, what can it matter to you whether you are in England or not? You won't see much of the country through these four walls, and that peep-hole—pointing to the skylight—is out of reach."
It now, for the first time, struck Everard that he was taken for somebody else; who on earth could have the least interest in his imprisonment? The instant this thought crossed his mind, he said, in a calmer tone—
"My good friend, you had certainly mistaken your game. I cannot be the person you meant to capture. For whom do you take me?"
"Just for who you are, I suppose; the tutor that was engaged by his Excellency the Baron Steinbach."
"The man who caused me to be arrested?" exclaimed Everard, now feeling sure he was in Germany, perhaps in one of the Baron's own castles.
"Perhaps it may be, and perhaps it mayn't," said the man doggedly; then pointing to the hearth, he observed, "There's plenty of wood and a match-box. You can make a fire when you want it. I shall come again in two hours."
So saying, he was about to quit the apartment, when Everard, with a sudden impulse, made a spring toward the door; but the man, perceiving his design, gave a loud whistle, on which his comrade who had made his exit after throwing down the wood, appeared at the entry with his pistol presented.

"No go, you see," said the other. "Our business is to keep you safe, and we mean to do it. You'll be treated like a prince, and may have anything in reason, but pass away the time. There's a lot of books in that old chest—they are all foreigners, but as you are a scholar, I suppose you can make 'em out."
He then withdrew, and the harsh grating of the rusty bolts told the captive there was no hope of liberation.
Sick at heart, and tormented by a thousand vain conjectures, he paced to and fro, examining closely every corner of his prison house, but there was not the slightest sign of any aperture that might promise a chance of escape.
After spending some time in this unprofitable pursuit, he began to think he might as well have some breakfast, for it is beneficially ordained that men shall have a propensity to eat and drink under all circumstances, and so he made a tolerable meal. Then he set about kindling a fire, which, for some reason, he despised the gloom, and gave a cheerful aspect even to that dismal place of confinement.
At the end of about two hours the two jailers returned, masked and armed as before, and one kept guard at the door while the other went in. He had brought a heap of blankets and a coverlet for the bed, and laughed heartily as he looked at the remnants of the feast.

"All right," he said; "I knew you'd think better of the fasting way. That never answers for long sojourns."
Everard again tried to elicit some information as to where he was, and the object of his incarceration; but on these points his strange attendant was impetrateable, intimating that every thing requisite for the prisoner's comfort would be supplied, but no questions answered.
When he had gone, Everard opened the great wooden chest, which was half-filled with old volumes, chiefly French and German. They were in a very dilapidated state, but to him they proved an inestimable treasure, which served to beguile the weary hours of a captivity that continued week after week, without any apparent prospect of coming to an end. Threats and entreaties were alike unavailing to obtain any clue to the motive of the outrage or the instigator of it; and as the agents of this secret enemy never came singly or without firearms, nothing could be effected by force, and at length the unhappy captive resigned himself to his fate, trusting that time would solve the mystery.

CHAPTER II.
Mary waited day after day in anxious expectation of hearing from her lover, who had promised to write to her before he left England, and tell her to what part of Germany he was going, for he did not himself know where the Baron's domain was situated.
The days went by, still no letter came, and when three weeks had passed away without bringing any tidings, her uneasiness grew beyond her power of concealment.
"You distress yourself heedlessly, my child," said her mother; "the letter has, no doubt, been lost; he will write again as soon as he reaches his destination."
"But if an accident has happened to him, dear mother, in this long journey; and across the sea, too, in such stormy weather! I dread to think of it."
"These are imaginary troubles, Mary. He is, as we all are, under the protection of Providence, and on that Providence you must rely. Be patient, my child, and all will be well."
Mary tried to be patient; but as time wore on and no news came of the absentee, her heart grew very sad, the bright bloom faded from her cheeks, and the tears would often rush unbidden to her eyes, as her thoughts wandered back to the happy days that were gone.
And so the spring-time arrived, and with it came another sore trouble, for Mrs. Archer began to exhibit symptoms of a rapid decline, and then Mary thought less of her other sorrows, so terrible was the fear of losing this dear and cherished parent.

It was in the midst of this affliction that Mr. Lonsdale renewed his visits at the cottage, and expressed his sorrow on observing the lady's increasing debility, at the same time requesting permission to send his own physician to see her, a proposal she most gratefully accepted.
The doctor came. He said she required

good wine and strengthening diet; but, alas! the remedies he prescribed were beyond her means to obtain; and then the rich man saw his advantage, for he knew that Mary had never once heard from her absent lover since his departure, and he thought he now saw his way to win the treasure he had so long coveted.
He sent the richest wines from his own cellar, and the choicest game from his preserves, and many costly delicacies to tempt the appetite that turned from ordinary food; and the beneficial effects of such nutriment were soon visible in the improved looks and returning strength of the invalid.
Mary guessed but too well the motive for these attentions; and the reward that would be asked; yet she could not but feel grateful for kindness that had, in all probability, saved her beloved parent from the grave.
At length the dread offer was made—Mr. Lonsdale pleaded that Everard's silence was a proof of his inconstancy; that he had most likely formed some other engagement; and that, at all events, his neglect was sufficient to absolve Mary from her plighted vows. These arguments had no effect on her.

She did not believe he was faithless—It was easier to imagine his death than his falsehood; and if he were dead, what could she do but mourn his loss forever. Again, therefore, she rejected the proffered hand of her aged suitor, who did not as before withdraw his pretensions, but continued to urge them with a perseverance that was truly distressing to the heartbroken girl, especially as her mother, who regarded the wealthy old man as her benefactor, and even as the savior of her life, was won over to espouse his cause.
"My dear Mary," she said, "it would be a great happiness to me if you could but make up your mind to marry Mr. Lonsdale. My father would give you a thousand pounds, and what would become of you if I should die?"
"Think not of that dearest mother. I have no fears for myself; and oh, do not ask me to marry while I am uncertain as to Everard's fate. If I were sure that he was dead or false to me, I then, perhaps, should not care what my future lot might be."
Thus passed the summer and the autumn; the trees were beginning to shed their leaves, the wintry winds to blow, and Mary would often sit and listen to their melancholy wailing till she fancied that they were singing the dirge of her departed lover.

One day when alone, and absorbed in such meditations, she was aroused by the entrance of Mr. Lonsdale, whose countenance was graver than usual, as he took her hand and said in a hesitating voice—
"Miss Archer, I can scarcely hope to be a welcome visitor this morning, for I am the bearer of ill news."
She gazed at him in terror.
"Oh, sir, what is the matter? What have you heard?"
"Nothing more than I anticipated. I have heard tidings of Mr. Newton."
"Is he dead?" shrieked the affrighted girl, clasping her hands with intense agitation.
"No, no, far better, far, than that, as concerns himself. He is married."
"I do not believe it," she exclaimed wildly. "Who told you this, Mr. Lonsdale? You cannot think it true?"
"I can have no doubt of it, my dear young lady, here is my authority!"
And he drew a newspaper from his pocket, and pointed out the following paragraph:
"On the 16th of September was married, at Aix les Bains, Rev. Everard Newton, late of Oxford, to Maria Grieseler, the rich widow of Cologne. The bridegroom is 26 the bride verging on 70; but as charity covereth a multitude of sins, so we presume gold covereth a multitude of wrinkles. The happy pair are making a tour of the chief continental cities, but it is understood their permanent residence will be at Cologne."
This was a stunning blow for poor Mary. The paper dropped from her trembling hands, the blood forsook her cheeks and quivering lips, the light faded from her eyes, a faintness came over her, and she would have fallen to the ground, but Mr. Lonsdale caught her in his arms and seated her gently on the sofa.
"Dear Mary," he said, in the softest accents, "this young man is unworthy of such emotions. What you have got to do is to repent, and not to grieve."
And then he added, as if speaking to himself, "How degraded must be the mind of that man who could throw away so priceless a pearl as this!"
Mary had struggled hard to keep herself from fainting, and she succeeded—Her bursting heart found relief in a flood of tears; but the world was a desert now, it had no more joys for her, for the light of hope was extinguished, and all before her was dark and dreary.
And then her mother touched her hand tenderly but respectfully with his lips and she did not recoil, for sympathy with sorrow is very sweet, let it come from whom it may, and he saw with great exultation that a step was gained towards the object he had in view.
The winter was now approaching with rapid strides. The first snow had fallen, and the frost glittered in the beams of the rising sun. Mr. L. came every day to the cottage, and people began to talk of Mary as his future bride. One day her mother said to her—
"I am afraid, dear Mary, this winter will try me very severely. If I could but feel that you were provided for, my mind would be at rest."
"Oh, mother, mother, I cannot bear to hear you talk so! Think how much better you are than you were some months ago. Why should you trouble yourself about me? I am able to provide for myself, if need be; but now that you are so well, what is there for fear?"
"There is this to fear, Mary. I have been kept alive by the kindness of Mr. Lonsdale; but all that he has done is for your sake, and in the hope of making you his wife. If that cannot be—and I would not have you sacrifice your happiness on my account—we must not expect that his friendship will be continued. I only wonder it has lasted so long."
Mary hoped otherwise. She thought it would be continued, but she soon found that was a vain delusion. Mr. Lonsdale declared that if Mary persisted in refusing him, he would return to Italy without delay; but that if she consented to be his wife, he would remain in England, and his house should be her mother's home.

"For her sake, dear Mary," he urged, "Think well of this. You say you never can love again! Well, be it so. I shall be content with your esteem, and perhaps that is all I have a right to expect of one so young and lovely. Your mother shall live with us, Mary, and I will be the friend and protector of you both."
Mary listened in silent sadness; she began to think it was wrong and selfish to consult her own feelings alone. Besides, what had she to care for in this world but the beloved mother, who should their only friend forsake them, would droop and die.
And so the beautiful girl of eighteen consented to marry the little, deformed, grey-headed old gentleman of sixty-five, and everybody said what a fortunate girl Mary Archer was, and what an excellent match she had made. Bridal presents were lavished upon her, but they afforded her no pleasure. She felt more like a victim destined for sacrifice than a maiden awaiting her nuptial hour; nor could any persuasions induce her to become a bride till the anniversary of the day of Everard's departure was past.

"Mother," said she, "let me give that one day to mournful remembrance, and it shall be the last."
CHAPTER III.
Everard had languished for many weeks in his mysterious prison without a prospect of release, but how long he had been there he knew not, for he had taken no account of time, nor could he draw from Wolfe, his keeper, a single word to enlighten him as to what month it was, or even what day of the week.
He perceived by the change of temperature that the winter had passed away, and by the increasing warmth of the sun's rays, and by the penetration of the skylight for a brief space each day, that the summer was advancing. Beyond this he had nothing to guide him, and but for the hope of being soon liberated, he would have sunk into a state of utter despondency.

One thought tormented him incessantly. His Mary—what would she think of his long silence? Would she believe he had deserted her, and if she doubted him, would she still remain true?
The vigilance of his two masked gaolers was unobated, and if he asked any question as to the termination of his captivity, the only answer he could obtain was—
"You are just one day nearer to it than you were yesterday."
Wolfe, who was a tall, powerful fellow, was inclined to be jocular in speech, and after a while Everard began to look upon his visits as a relief from the monotony of silence and solitude. Nor was the man unkind of his comforts. He brought his meals regularly, and supplied him with a sufficient change of apparel, as also with the means of making his toilet, which he did not neglect, thinking that, if he should be suddenly set at liberty, it would be well not to re-enter society looking like a wild man of the woods.
But no such chance presented itself, and the summer was wearing away, for the days began to look gloomy, and the nights grew long and cold. Again the fire blazed on the hearth, the sun ceased to send his light into that dreary chamber, and Everard felt that the winter was near.

His fortune was fast deserting him, he began to give himself up to despair. The only source of enjoyment left open to him was the old chest with its store of time-worn volumes, far more precious in his eyes than gold and jewels would have been. The chest itself, too, had become an object of interest, for it was covered with grotesque figures, which he sometimes fancifully endeavored to decipher, and held with them imaginary conversations.
One night, far on into the winter, and as it seemed to him about midnight, he retired to his pallet bed, leaving the fire still brightly burning on the hearth. His eyes rested as they often did, on the old oak chest in the opposite corner, on which the red glare of the embers, threw a brilliant light, so that the figures on the front were seen with remarkable distinctness. Among these was one to which he had taken a particular fancy. It was a dwarf, stout and ugly, uncouth features, but pleasant-looking, with, exhibiting more of worth than mischief in its strange, unaccountable countenance. He had so often gazed on this fantastic object, that it had assumed the character of a familiar acquaintance, almost a friend, and he had frequently amused himself by fancying that it smiled benignantly at him and seemed disposed to be upon quite intimate terms with him.
On the night in question this impression was stronger than usual, and he kept his eyes fixed on the image as if fascinated by some irresistible spell, and as the light of the fire glowed on the dwarf's face, he could almost have sworn that the lips moved and the eyes rolled in the head.

He looked more intently, and presently the arms stirred, then the feet—then the whole figure becoming animated, stepped forth into the room, where it appeared about three times the size of the carved image, which was only a foot in height.
"Who and what are you?" demanded Everard, who felt neither surprise nor fear at this extraordinary phenomenon.
"I am the guardian of this chest," replied the dwarf. "For three hundred years I have kept watch over it, and have rescued from imprisonment and death many a wretched victim of oppression by sending them to the treasure in it, and how I told me what this treasure is, and how I am to find it?"
"No, no. He who would benefit by the discovery must have wit enough to make it for himself."
And so saying, the strange apparition dwindled down to its original dimensions, and went back to its place, where it resumed the immobility of a wooden figure.

Everard lay in a state of dreamy bewilderment, the vision, as it were, still floating before him, till daylight began to appear through the window above, and then he roused himself, and looked out on

the apartment, wondering whether the adventure of the night was a reality or only a dream. Reason told him it was nothing but a creation of the brain during sleep, yet it dwelt powerfully on his mind. As soon as Wolfe had left him, during his customary visit that morning, he took out all the books from the chest, and got on to see if he could find any spring or device where there might be some secret opening. But he had not enough light for a very close inspection, as Wolfe had taken away the lamp with him, so after feeling every part with his hands, and finding nothing, he set about examining the outside, and made an effort to move the chest from its place, but it was fitted into the corner as firm as a rock, and then it struck him that it was no moveable piece of furniture, but part of the room on the two sides that were against the wall, he found that one sounded more hollow than the other, and concluded there was an opening behind it.
That side of the chest then might possibly be moved if he could possibly find the way, and after trying in vain to slide it right and left, he thought of pressing it downwards, when, oh joy unexpressible! it yielded at last, and disclosed a passage, but of which he could not be sure till he had a light to explore it.

Related with this discovery, which corresponded so miraculously with his night vision, he drew up the artfully contrived door again, replaced the books, and closed the lid of the chest, just as the man came with his dinner.
He was too much excited to eat, so he complained of not feeling well; and as he pressed him about half a pint of brandy, which, in case of a nocturnal enterprise, he knew would be a very good assistant. Never had any day appeared so long as this; but it came to an end at last. The lamp was lighted, his supper was brought in, and he was left alone for the night. He lost not a moment in beginning the work before him. He felt as if his liberty was already regained; and having taken the books out of the chest and opened the sliding door, he deposited the nest and small bottle of brandy, in his pockets, put on his travelling cloak and cap which fortunately had been restored to him, and placing the lamp in a lantern, so that the wind would not blow out the light, he passed through the opening and drew up the door, finding that he could open it on that side as well as the other, and thus the chest worked, in the room, present its ordinary appearance.
The narrow passage he had entered seemed to run between two stone walls, and at the end of about a hundred yards was terminated by a flight of rough stone steps, leading to a spacious vault. Here, on the opposite side, was a low archway, that proved to be the entrance to a long subterranean passage, extremely damp, but from which the fresh air did not altogether excluded, for Everard could now and then feel it blowing fresh and cool in his face.
After walking on, as he supposed, about a quarter of a mile, he came at length into a cave, that seemed to be hewn out of a rock; and the only means of egress from this was a hole, so small that it scarcely admitted of his crawling through upon his hands and knees.
Only some of the enjoyment left open to him was the old chest with its store of time-worn volumes, far more precious in his eyes than gold and jewels would have been. The chest itself, too, had become an object of interest, for it was covered with grotesque figures, which he sometimes fancifully endeavored to decipher, and held with them imaginary conversations.
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the apartment, wondering whether the adventure of the night was a reality or only a dream. Reason told him it was nothing but a creation of the brain during sleep, yet it dwelt powerfully on his mind. As soon as Wolfe had left him, during his customary visit that morning, he took out all the books from the chest, and got on to see if he could find any spring or device where there might be some secret opening. But he had not enough light for a very close inspection, as Wolfe had taken away the lamp with him, so after feeling every part with his hands, and finding nothing, he set about examining the outside, and made an effort to move the chest from its place, but it was fitted into the corner as firm as a rock, and then it struck him that it was no moveable piece of furniture, but part of the room on the two sides that were against the wall, he found that one sounded more hollow than the other, and concluded there was an opening behind it.
That side of the chest then might possibly be moved if he could possibly find the way, and after trying in vain to slide it right and left, he thought of pressing it downwards, when, oh joy unexpressible! it yielded at last, and disclosed a passage, but of which he could not be sure till he had a light to explore it.

Related with this discovery, which corresponded so miraculously with his night vision, he drew up the artfully contrived door again, replaced the books, and closed the lid of the chest, just as the man came with his dinner.
He was too much excited to eat, so he complained of not feeling well; and as he pressed him about half a pint of brandy, which, in case of a nocturnal enterprise, he knew would be a very good assistant. Never had any day appeared so long as this; but it came to an end at last. The lamp was lighted, his supper was brought in, and he was left alone for the night. He lost not a moment in beginning the work before him. He felt as if his liberty was already regained; and having taken the books out of the chest and opened the sliding door, he deposited the nest and small bottle of brandy, in his pockets, put on his travelling cloak and cap which fortunately had been restored to him, and placing the lamp in a lantern, so that the wind would not blow out the light, he passed through the opening and drew up the door, finding that he could open it on that side as well as the other, and thus the chest worked, in the room, present its ordinary appearance.
The narrow passage he had entered seemed to run between two stone walls, and at the end of about a hundred yards was terminated by a flight of rough stone steps, leading to a spacious vault. Here, on the opposite side, was a low archway, that proved to be the entrance to a long subterranean passage, extremely damp, but from which the fresh air did not altogether excluded, for Everard could now and then feel it blowing fresh and cool in his face.
After walking on, as he supposed, about a quarter of a mile, he came at length into a cave, that seemed to be hewn out of a rock; and the only means of egress from this was a hole, so small that it scarcely admitted of his crawling through upon his hands and knees.
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On the night in question this impression was stronger than usual, and he kept his eyes fixed on the image as if fascinated by some irresistible spell, and as the light of the fire glowed on the dwarf's face, he could almost have sworn that the lips moved and the eyes rolled in the head.

He looked more intently, and presently the arms stirred, then the feet—then the whole figure becoming animated, stepped forth into the room, where it appeared about three times the size of the carved image, which was only a foot in height.
"Who and what are you?" demanded Everard, who felt neither surprise nor fear at this extraordinary phenomenon.
"I am the guardian of this chest," replied the dwarf. "For three hundred years I have kept watch over it, and have rescued from imprisonment and death many a wretched victim of oppression by sending them to the treasure in it, and how I told me what this treasure is, and how I am to find it?"
"No, no. He who would benefit by the discovery must have wit enough to make it for himself."
And so saying, the strange apparition dwindled down to its original dimensions, and went back to its place, where it resumed the immobility of a wooden figure.

Everard lay in a state of dreamy bewilderment, the vision, as it were, still floating before him, till daylight began to appear through the window above, and then he roused himself, and looked out on

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